

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 04093 01 OF 02 192115Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01
CIAE-00 COME-00 EPG-02 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-01
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P 192043Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3532
INFO AMCONSUL CALGARY
AMCONSUL VANCOUVER

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 OTTAWA 04093

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: SENV, ENRG, PINT, CA
SUBJECT: BERGER REPORT REACTIONS

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: CANADA IS NOW IN THIRD PHASE OF REACTIONS TO BERGER REPORT. PRESS HAS EXHAUSTED NEWS REPORTS ABOUT IT, EDITORIALISTS HAVE HAD THEIR SAY, AND FIRST WAVE OF POLITICAL LEADERS' STATEMENTS HAVE SUBSIDED. FOCUS IS NOW ON ALCAN ROUTE ALTERNATIVE; ON IMPORTANCE OF YUKON INDIAN NATIVE CLAIMS, AND ON MORE FAR REACHING IMPLICATIONS OF EXPLOITATION OF CANADIAN NORTHERN ENERGY RESOURCES. NEXT MAJOR EVENTS WILL BE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE AND APPEARANCE OF NEB REPORT IN EARLY JULY AND LYSYK REPORT AUGUST 1. END SUMMARY.

2. NATIVE CLAIMS: BERGER REPORT HAS GIVEN YUKON INDIANS A NEW WEAPON AS THEIR NATIVE CLAIMS NEGOTIATIONS PROCEED. COUNCIL OF YUKON INDIANS CHAIRMAN DANIEL JOHNSON STATED THAT INDIAN CLAIMS MUST BE SETTLED AND IMPLEMENTED BEFORE THERE IS ANY PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION IN THE YUKON, AND HE

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PAGE 02 OTTAWA 04093 01 OF 02 192115Z

THREATENED "...POSSIBLE VIOLENCE AND DISORDER, IF A PIPELINE IS BUILT HERE BEFORE OUR CLAIMS ARE SETTLED AND IMPLEMENTED." HE SAID COUNCIL WAS DEMANDING SAME 10 YEAR DELAY ON ALCAN CONSTRUCTION AS BERGER RECOMMENDED FOR MACKENZIE VALLEY LINE. HE ALSO INDICATED THAT YUKON INDIANS WOULD BE PREPARED TO TAKE MATTER TO COURT IF DEMANDS NOT MET. THIS COULD BE CONSIDERABLE TURNAROUND

SINCE PRIOR TO BERGER REPORT, GENERAL CONSENSUS HAS BEEN THAT YUKON CLAIMS CLOSE TO SETTLEMENT. PRO-DEVELOPMENT FORCES OF NWT COUNCIL ARE URGING REFERENDUM ON MACKENZIE VALLEY PIPELINE (CALGARY'S 223). THOSE WHO FAVOR MACKENZIE VALLEY PIPELINE ARE BEGINNING TO RECOVER FROM SHOCK OF BERGER REPORT AND ARE NOW MOBILIZING FORCES TO PRESSURE GOVERNMENT NOT TO REJECT THAT ROUTE. NWT COUNCILORS ARE CALLING FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT WITHIN A SPECIFIC TIME PERIOD AND DEMANDING A VOICE IN SETTLEMENT

OF NATIVE LAND CLAIMS. TERRITORIAL POSITION ALLEGEDLY SET OUT IN DOCUMENTS TABLED IN TERRITORIAL COUNCIL'S 62ND SESSION. DOCUMENTS HIT HARD AT CONCEPT OF DENE NATION AND CALL FOR IMMEDIATE TRANSFER OF SOME PROVINCIAL-TYPE RESPONSIBILITIES FROM OTTAWA TO NWT GOVERNMENT.

4. CABINET VIEWS: DIFFERENCES WITHIN CABINET OVER PIPE-LINE ROUTE AND OVER ATTITUDE TOWARD NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT CONTINUES TO RIPPLE SURFACE. INDIAN AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS MINISTER WARREN ALLMAND HAS REAFFIRMED HIS PREDECESSOR'S ENDORSEMENT OF GENERAL CONCEPT OF INUIT CLAIMS, WHICH INCLUDE CALL FOR SPECIAL INUIT TERRITORY IN ARCTIC, WITH FURTHER REFINEMENT THAT HE ALSO SUPPORTS ANOTHER INUIT TERRITORY IN THE WESTERN ARCTIC (I.E., CLAIM PRESENTED BY COMMITTEE ON ORIGINAL PEOPLES ENTITLEMENT (COPE) WHICH SPLIT FROM ORIGINAL INUIT TAPISIRAT CLAIM).

5. MEANWHILE, ENERGY MINISTER ALASTAIR GILLESPIE, IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 OTTAWA 04093 01 OF 02 192115Z

WHITEHORSE, HAS REPORTEDLY SAID THAT NOT BUILDING NORTHERN NATURAL GAS PIPELINE, OR DELAYING IT, WILL MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO MEET CANADIAN ENERGY SELF-SUFFICIENCY GOAL. HE STRESSED THAT THERE IS AN URGENT NEED FOR CANADA TO DEVELOP ITS NORTHERN NATURAL GAS RESOURCES. (EMBASSY COMMENT: GILLESPIE HAS HAD A DIFFICULT TIME IN GETTING POINT ACROSS TO PUBLIC, DUE IN PART TO MEDIA BIAS, THAT NATIONAL INTEREST MUST ALSO ACCOUNT FOR ENERGY REQUIREMENTS; IT IS NOT RESTRICTED TO PROTECTING NORTHERN ENVIRONMENT AND NATIVE PEOPLES' RIGHTS.) GILLESPIE DID NOT GO SO FAR AS TO EXPLICITLY ENDORSE ANY PARTICULAR PIPELINE.

6. PRESS COMMENTARY: TORONTO GLOBE AND MAIL CORRESPONDENT JEFF CARRUTHERS, IN MAY 18 ARTICLE, CONJECTURES THAT "THE POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE FUTURE OF QUEBEC PROMISES TO BE A MAJOR FACTOR IN THE EXPECTED REJECTION BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF A CANADIAN-US MACKENZIE RIVER VALLEY NATURAL GAS PIPELINE PROJECT..." ACCORDING

TO CARRUTHERS, "...THE NEB IS EXPECTED TO CONCLUDE THAT THE PROJECT BY...ARCTIC GAS...WOULD NOT BE ECONOMICAL UNLESS OTTAWA TOOK DIRECT STEPS TO ENSURE A MARKET FOR DELTA GAS, ESPECIALLY IN QUEBEC...IF OTTAWA WERE TO BUILD THE ARCTIC GAS PROJECT IT WOULD HAVE TO DO SO ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT QUEBEC WOULD STAY IN CONFEDERATION." HOWEVER, CARRUTHERS CONCLUDES HIS PIECE BY SAYING: "A LESS OBVIOUS POSSIBILITY IS THAT A SEPARATED QUEBEC MIGHT WORK OUT A SPECIAL ECONOMIC ARRANGEMENT WITH OTTAWA THAT WOULD, AMONG OTHER THINGS, ALLOW ENERGY TO MOVE INTO QUEBEC FROM THE REST OF CANADA AS THOUGH QUEBEC WERE

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 04093 02 OF 02 192118Z
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 02 OTTAWA 04093

STILL WITHIN CONFEDERATION." (EMBASSY COMMENT: POSSIBLE ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CANADA AND SEPARATED QUEBEC ARE, OF COURSE, HIGHLY PROBLEMATIC, AS NOTED OTTAWA 3073 AND WINNIPEG 168.)

8. BERGER VIEW: IN INTERVIEW ON CTV PROGRAM QUESTION PERIOD, JUSTICE BERGER HAS CLARIFIED HIS REPORT BY SAYING THAT IT SHOULD NOT BE SEEN AS SUPPORTING A REQUEST BY NATIVES FOR A VETO OVER DEVELOPMENT. "I SAID THAT WHEN IT IS IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST THAT RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT SHOULD TAKE PLACE, THAT SHOULD BE A MATTER WHERE THE PARLIAMENT OF CANADA SHOULD HAVE, AND INDEED MUST HAVE, THE RIGHT TO SUPERSEDE THE WISHES OF THE NATIVE PEOPLES".

9. COMMENT: DINA SOURCES HAVE CORRECTLY CHARACTERIZED PRESENT PERIOD AS REFLECTING UNCERTAINTY WHICH WILL NOT BE CLARIFIED UNTIL FURTHER EVENTS ON TIMETABLE OCCUR. NEXT MAJOR EVENTS WILL BE NEB REPORT IN EARLY JULY FOLLOWED BY LYSYK REPORT ON POSSIBLE IMPACT OF AN ALCAN PIPELINE ON AUGUST 1. GOC HAS NOT YET DECIDED WHETHER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 OTTAWA 04093 02 OF 02 192118Z

TO HOLD PROMISED PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE IN JULY OR AUGUST.

10. IMPORTANCE OF YUKON INDIANS' NEW CALL FOR 10 YEAR DELAY CAN BE BETTER EVALUATED AFTER EVENTS NOTED IN PARA 9 ABOVE. IN OUR VIEW, NEW YUKON INDIAN POSITION IS NOT SURPRISING SINCE 1) BERGER REPORT HAS GIVEN THEM NEW BARGAINING TOOL AND 2) IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR THEM NOT TO SHOW UNITY WITH OTHER INDIANS IN CALLING FOR 10 YEAR DELAY. HOWEVER, FACT REMAINS THAT WHITE POPULATION EXCEEDS NATIVE POPULATION IN YUKON TERRITORY AND ALASKA HIGHWAY ROUTE IS ALREADY DEVELOPED. MUCH WILL HINGE, THEREFORE, ON LYSYK REPORT. ENDERS

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